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Dean Logan's Blog

Prof. Gutoff Discuss the Law of Piracy at United Nations

Posted by David Logan on 06/23/2010 at 09:17 AM

Among the many eclectic scholars at RWU Law, few surpass Prof. Jonathan Gutoff's wide-ranging interests, including deep expertise on the history and law of piracy, a very hot topic around the world these days. (Indeed, a [Dutch court just convicted five Somalis of piracy](#).) Prof. Gutoff recently returned from the United Nations; following is a communication from Maria-Luisa Chavez, the Chief of the Department of Public Information at the United Nations Office of NGO Relations, summarizing Prof. Gutoff's presentation.



"I would like to express my sincere gratitude on behalf of the NGO community for your participation in our briefing entitled "High Tide, High Crime: Piracy and Other Crimes of the Sea.""

"Our NGOs appreciated the background you gave on piracy from a legal perspective even more coming right after our first speaker's overview of maritime crime from a UN point of view. Your informative presentation on the history of piracy and maritime law during the 18th and 19th centuries was extremely beneficial for the members of our NGO community to better understand how the problem arose and developed over time and the legal responses that evolved as a reaction to the issue. One of the key messages the NGOs took away from your presentation was that the legal tools used to curb piracy are only a small part of finding a "more complex landward solution" to, as you put it, "establish stable centralized authorities working to promote civil society." From the connections you made between the past and present issues, our NGOs realized that it is essential not just to deal with pirates but also those who fund and profit from the business in particular the "world wide web of cargo insurers"-major beneficiaries from this

criminal activity. I hope that your contribution to the Briefing will further inspire our NGO community to become more involved in the transnational effort you stressed that would be necessary to combat piracy.”

“On behalf of our NGO community, thank you again for your very enriching presentation. ”

Read the full text of Prof. Gutoff's [prepared remarks](#).